

Amendments to the Claims

The following amendments are with respect to the claims such as they were pending prior to the Office Action of April 17, 2009, as subsequently requested amendments have not been entered. Please amend claims 21 and 25. Please add claim 35. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims and listings of claims in the Application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-20. Cancelled.

21. (currently amended) A harness for use with breathing equipment, the harness comprising

at least one shoulder support panel; and

a belt portion, the belt portion comprising

attachment means for attaching a cylinder of breathable gas to the belt portion, the attachment means comprising mounting means for releasably engaging a mounting portion of the cylinder, and

[[a]] retaining means for retaining a retaining device ~~device~~ for the cylinder,

wherein ~~in use~~, the cylinder may be attached to the belt portion such that, during use with the breathing equipment, the cylinder may be alternated between first and second configurations,

wherein in the first configuration the cylinder is attached to the belt portion by both the mounting means and the retaining means, and ~~or else~~

wherein in the second configuration the cylinder is attached to the belt portion by the retaining means alone, and

wherein the shoulder support panel is adapted to be arranged in use to pass around a wearer over one shoulder in the manner of a bandolier or sash, and the belt portion is adapted to be arranged in use to pass around the waist of the wearer.

22. (previously presented) A harness according to claim 21, wherein the mounting means includes a flexible mounting plate for receiving a cylinder of breathing gas.

23. (previously presented) A harness according to claim 22, wherein the mounting plate is of moulded material.

24. (previously presented) A harness according to claim 22, wherein the mounting plate is moulded so as to include one or more recessed portions for receiving one or more components of breathing apparatus.

25. (currently amended) A harness according to claim 21, wherein when a cylinder is attached to the belt portion by both the mounting means and the retaining means, the cylinder and belt portion are juxtaposed in [[a]] the first configuration, and when the cylinder is attached to the belt portion by only the retaining means, the cylinder and belt portion are loosely attached in [[a]] the second configuration.

26. (previously presented) A harness according to claim 21, wherein when, in use, the cylinder and belt portion are retained in the second configuration a user is able to move the cylinder freely about his person whilst retaining attachment to the cylinder by the retaining means.

27. (previously presented) A harness according to claim 21, wherein the retaining means comprises one or more retaining straps and the retaining portion of the cylinder comprises a web, holster or cradle for holding the cylinder.

28. (previously presented) A harness according to claim 21, wherein the belt portion includes a flexible hip-plate arranged for location on a hip of a wearer, and at least two connectors for connecting the cylinder of breathable gas thereto, wherein a first connector is arranged for connecting the cylinder detachably, a second connector is arranged for connecting the cylinder non-detachably, the detachable connector being arranged to hold

the cylinder connected thereto in close proximity to the hip-plate, and the non-detachable connector being arranged to hold the cylinder connected thereto between the legs of a user when the detachable connector between the harness and the cylinder is detached.

29. (previously presented) A harness according to claim 28, wherein the cylinder has a manifold, in which the manifold includes a port for connecting a breathing-gas line from the cylinder to a face mask and in which the manifold further includes a connector for connecting the breathing apparatus to an additional fluid supply line.

30. (previously presented) A harness according to claim 22, wherein the shoulder panel is flexible and wherein the shoulder panel and mounting plate are of a composite material.

31. (previously presented) A harness according to claim 30, wherein the composite material comprises foam, which may be a closed-cell, open-face foam, such as compression-moulded EVA foam.

32. (previously presented) A harness according to claim 22, wherein the shoulder panel and mounting plate comprise a sandwich construction.

33. (previously presented) A harness according to claim 32, wherein shoulder panel and mounting plate comprise two layers of foam enclosing or encapsulating a layer of stiffer material therebetween.

34. (previously presented) A harness according to claim 22, wherein the shoulder panel and mounting plate comprises a single layer of foam sandwiched between two layers of stiffer material.

35. (new) A harness for use with breathing equipment, the harness comprising
at least one shoulder support panel adapted to be arranged in use to pass around a wearer over one shoulder in the manner of a bandolier or sash; and

a belt portion adapted to be arranged in use to pass around the waist of the wearer,
the belt portion comprising,

attachment means for attaching a cylinder of breathable gas to the belt
portion, the attachment means comprising mounting means for releasably
engaging a mounting portion of the cylinder, and

a retaining strap coupled to the cylinder, the retaining strap extendable to
remain coupled to the cylinder when both the mounting portion of the
cylinder is disengaged from the mounting means and the cylinder is
displaced to a location remote from the belt portion of the harness.